



Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services Division Statewide Victim Assistance Program: An Overview of Services

Through three main initiatives, the Statewide Victim Assistance Program provides assistance to victims, witnesses, prosecutors, and service providers across Illinois.

Direct Victim Assistance

The Office of the Attorney General provides direct services to crime victims and witnesses who are involved in cases in the Criminal Division, Sexually Violent Persons Bureau, and the Crime Victim Compensation Bureau. Direct Victim Assistance includes:

- **Victim and Witness Notification**
Notifies crime victims, their families, and witnesses to crime of court dates and relays case information during various stages of the criminal court process.
- **Prosecution Assistance**
Is a liaison between assistant attorneys general and crime victims, their families, and witnesses to crime throughout the duration of the case. Also provides support for crime victims, their families, and witnesses to crime requesting assistance in attending court dates.
- **Crime Victim Compensation**
Provides information on crime victim compensation and assistance in filing applications.
- **Victim Rights**
Advises crime victims, their families, and witnesses to crime of their rights according to the Illinois Constitution and the Illinois Crime Victim's Bill of Rights.
- **Referrals**
Supplies referral information for counseling and other relevant social services based on a comprehensive statewide network of local resources.

Crime Victims Assistance Line

The Attorney General's office offers a toll-free number to provide victims with referrals for service, crime victim compensation claim information, and assistance in completion of compensation applications. By calling 1-800-228-3368 (voice/TTY), victims can receive assistance in English and Spanish.

Outreach and Education Activities

Crime Victim Services staff conduct outreach and educational workshops to help service providers to better assist crime victims in obtaining financial assistance through the Crime Victim Compensation Program. Crime Victim Services staff also coordinate educational opportunities to help build the capacity of victim service providers and criminal justice system professionals.

Illinois Crime Victims Bill of Rights

The Illinois Constitution provides that crime victims shall have the following rights:*

- The right to be treated with fairness and respect for their dignity and privacy and to be free from harassment, intimidation and abuse throughout the criminal justice process.
- The right to notice of and to a hearing before a court ruling on a request for access to any of the victim's records, information or communications which are privileged or confidential by law.
- The right to timely notification of all court proceedings.
- The right to communicate with the prosecution.
- The right to be heard at any post-arraignment court proceeding in which a right of the victim is at issue and any court proceeding involving a post-arraignment release decision, plea or sentencing.
- The right to be notified of the conviction, sentence, imprisonment and release of the accused.
- The right to timely disposition of the case following the arrest of the accused.
- The right to be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process.
- The right to have the safety of the victim and the victim's family considered in denying or fixing the amount of bail, determining whether to release the defendant and setting conditions of release after arrest and conviction.
- The right to be present at the trial and all other court proceedings on the same basis as the accused, unless the victim is to testify and the court determines that the victim's testimony would be materially affected if the victim hears other testimony at the trial.
- The right to have present at all court proceedings, subject to the rules of evidence, an advocate and other support person of the victim's choice.
- The right to restitution.

**Under Illinois law, "A statement and explanation of the rights of crime victims...shall be given to a crime victim at the initial contact with the criminal justice system by the appropriate authorities and shall be conspicuously posted in all court facilities." (725 ILCS 120/4(b)).*

The law requires that some of these rights must be requested by the crime victim in writing.

If you would like more information on the Statewide Victim Assistance Program, please contact:

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Or call the Crime Victims Assistance Line at 1-800-228-3368. Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can reach us by using the 7-1-1 relay service.

Please visit our website at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov.

Chicago
1-800-386-5438

Springfield
1-800-243-0618

Carbondale
1-800-243-0607